



**TOWN OF CENTRAL
SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2006 - 7:00 PM
CENTRAL TOWN HALL
1067 WEST MAIN STREET
CENTRAL, SC 29630**

Present: Mayor Mac Martin; Council Members David Donald, Tony Craig, Lynne Odell Chapman, Tracey Reynolds, David Boyles, and Gary White; Interim Police Chief Ken Kirby; Fire Chief Ed Reynolds; Fire Department's Safety Officer Ben Smith; Police Officer Michael Torres.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mac Martin.

1. Council Member Lynne Chapman rendered the invocation.
2. Forum:
 - Mayor Martin allowed Council Member David Boyles time to question Fire Chief Ed Reynolds and/or Safety Officer Ben Smith. Mr. Boyles stated he didn't come prepared to interview anyone, but did ask Chief Reynolds some questions. He inquired about the quarterly report issue, asking how he could inspect everything in the Town without literally "pencil whipping" it and not doing the job right or why he "would" do everything in the Town quarterly. To which Chief Reynolds stated that he has been with the Fire Department for 16 years and out of that 16 years, 14 years he has been involved with the Fire Fighters Association. Through out the state 90% of the fire departments are volunteers. Members of the Association encourage the fire departments to do quarterly reports. By doing several inspections quarterly it prevented them from being overwhelmed at the end of the year trying to inspect all of them at once. Also, a quarterly report is sent to the State Fire Marshall's Office. Because of these reports, every year the Fire Marshall's Office has cleared them to get money from the State in July. Mr. Reynolds also stated that out of the 14 years he has been going to the meetings and attending trainings with other fire departments, this is the way all other fire departments do their reports. Mr. Boyles asked if it was stated anywhere that he is suppose to inspect businesses every quarter. Chief Reynolds stated that the way the law reads it is only once a year; and in checking with other municipalities they inspect quarterly.
 - Mr. Boyles asked if Clemson University had a fire call how many men would be available. Chief Reynolds stated that they have approximately 23 paid firefighters, including the Chief and Fire Marshall; 7 men per shift – 2 shifts per day; it takes 8 men per fire call. When they get a fire call, they call upon the local towns to assist because their men have put in a full shift and don't want to come back, plus they are paid employees. The City of Clemson has Fire Marshal John McGarry, who does all the inspections for the City. He is not employed by Clemson University; and he does not answer any fire calls. The City of Clemson pays the University Fire Department for their services. Donnie Brewer is the Fire Marshal for Clemson University.
 - Council Member Gary White asked Chief Reynolds if any reports had ever been falsified. Mr. Reynolds stated, "no, never." Mr. White asked who would have gotten copies of these reports. Mr. Reynolds stated everything that was sent to the State Fire Marshall's Office were copied and these copies were given to Ms. Grace Towe (former Town Clerk). She received all copies and copies of certifications because she had to sign them. Mr. White asked if copies of the quarterly reports were given to Mr. Donald. Mr. Reynolds stated he could not answer; he did not know. Mr. Donald stated he had never asked for them until recently. He did not know if his predecessor Stan Thompson had received copies. Mr. Reynolds said he asked Sandy (Brown, present Town Clerk), to search for the reports and they could not be located. Mr. White stated it had been brought to his attention that Mr. Donald has asked for a lot of copies - of a lot of things – of the fire department and asked how much time this took to do it. Mr. Reynolds said up until a month or so ago, any time Mr. Donald asked for a copy, Ben (Smith, Safety Officer) made copies and gave to him. Again, a couple of months ago Mr. Mishoe told Ben if he had several copies to make to take them to Town Hall and the clerks would assist him, and this has freed-up a lot of time.
 - No other questions from Mr. Boyles or Mr. White.
3. Executive Session:
 - Chair move for Council to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters of the Fire Department; seconded by David Donald. Mayor Martin, David Donald, Tony Craig, Lynne Chapman, Tracey Reynolds, and Gary White were in favor; David Boyles was opposed.
4. Action Items:
 - Council returned from Executive Session where no votes were taken only discussion. Mayor Martin stated it should be entered into the minutes we have a Recusal Statement from Council Member Tracey Reynolds due to a conflict of interest voting on actions of the Fire Department.
 - Mayor Martin stated, "We as the governing body of the Town of Central must address some problems. Here forth, I will present the problems and potential solutions:

The recent discussions have been of the definition of employee or volunteer and the relationship of the two; more specifically, treating volunteers as employees; also, the position of the Fire Chief currently held by Ed Reynolds. The position of fire chief is one of great responsibility. Not only the responsibility of getting the fire put out, but also the responsibility of fulfilling the requirements of the job description.

We, on Council, have issues that must be addressed pertaining to the qualifications of the current chief as well as his administration of the job. We must also address the organization of the fire department as a whole.

Serving on the council of a town as small as Central, where everyone is so well acquainted, sometimes the desire to help someone you know - feels stronger then the responsibility to take an action to promote the common good. But, I ask of everyone here to try to be objective.

The process of council to require enforcing of code and policies, administering duties and requiring compliance with job descriptions can and has been falsely construed through rumor, to be a personal attack on the Fire Department and Fire Chief. All members of this Council are sworn to protect the interest of the Town.

We have grown as a town and must address the need to update the organizational chart of the fire department as well

as the job description of the fire chief. I (Mayor Martin), submit to council the proposal for the changes to the organizational chart (a copy entered into the minutes). Eliminating the position of Part-Time Fire Inspector and creating the position of Executive Officer of the Fire department, who will report to the Administrator and supervise the Volunteer Fire Chief. Also, minor changes to the description of Fire Chief in an effort to separate the duties of volunteers from the requirements of employees. The following items need to be addressed at this time....."

- A. Mayor Martin moved to approve the changes to the organizational chart for the Fire Department, eliminate the position of Part-Time Safety Officer, create the position of Executive Officer of the Fire Department, and approve the changes to the position of Fire Chief. These changes will become effective immediately. This motion was seconded by Lynne Chapman. David Boyles asked if both were covered; Mayor Martin stated both were covered. This is to remove the old position of Safety Officer, create the position of Executive Officer and approve the changes to the Fire Chief. This is to approve the changes of the job descriptions, with a few additional changes. The vote was unanimous.
 - B. Mayor Martin stated they must address items relating to previous actions. David Donald asked if this was an ordinance or policy. Mayor Martin stated it was neither, that it was a change in the organizational chart. Again, addressing items related to previous actions, they must decide if the Executive Officer is to be appointed or hired. Mayor Martin called for a vote with him, David Donald, Tony Craig, and Lynne Chapman in favor of hiring; David Boyles and Gary White were opposed hiring. Therefore, the Executive Officer is a hired position.
 - C. Mayor Martin stated Fire Chief Reynolds has not completed the requirement to become a Fire Marshal; however, the requirement has been removed from the position of Volunteer Fire Chief. He made a motion that Ed Reynolds serve as the Volunteer Fire Chief under these restrictions. This motion was seconded by David Boyles; the vote was unanimous.
 - D. - Fire Safety Inspections. Mayor Martin stated under the newly created positions the fire inspections will no longer be the responsibility of the Fire Chief. However, Chief Reynolds failed to fulfill this duty or delegate that these inspection be done in a timely manner in which they were intended. This is a serious incident that Council can not ignore. At this time Mayor Martin moved that the Fire Chief be verbally reprimanded. David Donald seconded this motion. Mayor Martin, David Donald, Tony Craig, and Lynne Chapman were in favor. David Boyles and Gary White were opposed.
5. Consensus Items:
- Mayor Martin stated there are many items pertaining to the Fire Department that will need to be addressed by the Administrator and new Executive Officer. The following are items that the Council may consider to be priority items:
 - A. Election Policy. Mayor Martin said in order to provide fair elections that will represent interest of all Fire Department Personnel; he moved that it be the consensus of Council that an election policy that is fair and equitable to all department members be presented to Council prior to the next scheduled election in January 2008. This motion was seconded by David Donald; the vote was unanimous.
 - B. Picture fund. Mayor Martin stated it is the prerogative of the volunteers to raise money and spend these funds in ways deemed important to the Fire Department members. In the spirit of keeping these expenditures transparent and in the best interest of the Fire Department, Mayor Martin moved that it be the consensus of Council that all expenditures of monies raised in the name of the Town of Central Volunteer Fire Department be approved by a committee consisting of the Volunteer Fire Chief, the Executive Officer, and another Firefighter selected by the members of the Department who is neither an officer in the top 20 of the Fire Department roster nor related to anyone else on the expenditure committee. This motion was seconded by Lynne Chapman; the vote was unanimous.
 - C. Fire Call Book. Mayor Martin stated, where volunteer fire department members sign a book attesting their participation in a fire event is one that can be potentially, easily abused. They have unsuccessfully addressed this issue many times. He then moved that it be the consensus of Council that a functional plan for tracking participation be developed. This motion was seconded by David Donald; the vote was unanimous.
6. Mayor Martin called for any additional items before he adjourned.
- David Boyles stated there was some discussion about changing committee assignments and Mayor Martin stated they would address it in January. He wants to talk to some Council Members personally before making any changes to the committees. It is one of his authorities to change the assignments of the committees.
7. Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Brown, Town Clerk

Approved by Council: Janaury 15, 2007